

A Feline Tale of Busted Hopes.

Speaking about the feline disposition to sling, reminds me of a very curious and not altogether unsuccessful experiment made in Cheyenne not many years ago. There was a sort of musical genius at large there named Johnson—a promising young man, or perhaps he would have been promising had he let tarantula juice alone. He got to bending his elbow too often in the East, and his folks despairing of getting him away from dubious associations there, concluded it would be best to ship the convivialist out West, where in fact they were likely to be a dozen times worse, with a possible additional hempen noose association in case he should get too much sulphate of zinc aboard and go to trifling with somebody's live stock.

Well, Johnson got a job as organist in one of the Cheyenne churches, and actually rose high enough in grace to wear a biled shirt and plaster his shock of hair with pomade on Sundays. But this spurt did not last very long, and one night a Rocky Mountain "Thomas and Jeremiah," taken as the windup of a spree, got the better of the erring musician and he laid out until morning in the cold and wet. The undertaker harvested Johnson that day, and the sky pilot later talked at the funeral of the mysterious ways of a divine Providence he didn't know anything about. But the gravedigger hit the target in saying he had "buried lots of them whisky pneumonias."

This Johnson was a character. He had a theory in harmonics which he tried to put into practice that convulsed the entire town. He figured that by hitting the tail of a cat at certain distances from "the socket of the candlestick," as he expressed it, notes of certain positions on the scale would be produced. Then by striking the tails of several cats at once in previously ascertained locations the product would be a musical chord. So he tried it on several cats, and, as he claimed, succeeded, to their intense astonishment and his equally intense satisfaction. Then it was that Johnson's lofty genius rose to the exigencies of the occasion. He arranged a board with holes cut in it for the heads of his living feline musical scale, as divers severe scratchings convinced him this would be the eminently proper procedure. Then he arranged a smaller board behind with smaller holes through which to run the cats' tails, and the mechanism in the shape of a row of miniature pile drivers connected by strings with the action of a cabinet organ, and so placed as to fall on certain parts of the feline caudal anatomy. Now the main "idée" of this beautiful scheme was that for every note or chord struck on the organ, a corresponding note or chord would be produced from the feline chorus by the dropping of these pile drivers on the tails of the cats, and thus, as Johnson announced afterwards to an eager and expectant audience, it was possible to give to a breathless musical world a feline concerto.

The whole combination was placed on a stage in the rear of the largest saloon in Cheyenne, where Johnson took sixteen captured felines and finally got them fastened in their appropriate places. Everything was then in readiness; the affair had been talked all over town, and the saloon was crowded "clear across the street" when the curtain rose and Johnson was discovered seated at the organ arrayed in the glories of a biled shirt with frills, while the cats sat on their haunches in gala day attire and their eyes blinking and winking in the unsteady flickering of the tallow-dip footlights. Of course the boys whooped things up, as Johnson squared himself for the greatest effort of his life.

Now Johnson maintained for the rest of his natural born days that if the boys had only kept quiet and not got to yelling like Comanches on a scalp-hunt, and let the cats alone, the concert

would not only have been the recherche-est blow-out that ever struck Cheyenne this side of McGinty's funeral, but would have proven an advance in musical science calculated to place the name of Johnson in the same list with Bach, Sir Isaac Newton, Steinway, and "all them 'ere other big bugs." But the crowd suddenly, as if inspired of the evil one, began firing onions, turnips, pretzels, cigar stumps and such things at the cats, and the poor things became terrified. This was intensified by the thumping of the clappers on their tails and the roar of the organ. Well, there was fun, and the Vokes family would have given the proceeds of a year's engagements to have caught onto the performance. Things presently became worse and worse, as the cats got to yelling, tearing and scratching to fetch loose and escape, while the crowd grew more uproarious than ever. Finally Johnson, seeing that "the jig was up," got mad and threw loose the neck frame on the cats, letting them all out.

And, oh, my country! the racket was something tremendous, as the cats got out among the crowd, and everybody began tumbling over the benches and over one another to escape the feline onslaught. Then some one turned in a fire alarm, and the department responded with a promptness that astonished themselves—also some other people. And the first thing the boys knew was a s-w-i-s-h and a s-w-a-s-h as a ninety-foot head of water from the city main came dashing, splashing, into the saloon. The crowd crushed and crashed through the windows, through trap doors in the roof, trap doors in the floor, and all finally got away, with a varied and interesting assortment of contusions, bruises and cuts, but I think this disappointment was really the means of Johnson's acquiring the sunset-colored jag that ended his wild and checkered career.

ROBT. J. JESSUP.

The Cabman's Bail.

The young man walked by the hansom drawn up in front of an uptown hotel, took a quick look at the interior of the vehicle, hesitated for a moment, and walked on a few paces, relates the Mail and Express. He halted on the edge of the curb and seemed to be considering some deep problem. The driver, perched on the back of the modern chariot, was scanning the horizon in search of a prospective fare.

The young man gulped down a swelling in his throat and approached the hansom from the rear. He took another glance at the interior of the vehicle and asked nervously:

"How much to—er—the Grand Central depot?"

"Dollar 'n a half," said cabby, with due disregard of legal rates.

"All right. Go ahead, quick," said the young man, clambering into the hansom.

Arriving at the depot the young man nervously thrust the fare into cabby's hand and disappeared in the big waiting room.

And cabby surveyed the interior of the hansom and smiled. From one of the capacious pockets of his coat he produced a cheap wallet stuffed with paper and bound by a stout elastic. This he deposited carefully upon the seat in plain view of passers-by.

"That's the fourth sucker today," he soliloquized, as he clambered to his perch. "The pocketbooks cost me a nickel apiece an' it's considerable trouble to stuff 'em and make 'em look natural—but they do bring trade. Geddap!"

"I noticed a little story the other day to the effect that a Paris lover scribbled a note to his lady love on the back of her pug dog."

"I suppose he put 'R. S. V. P.' in the corner."

"Eh! What does that mean?"

"Respond, sweetheart, via pug."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

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